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By the King,

A PROCLAMATION,

For Enforcing the Due Execution of the Acts of Parliament for Erecting the Post-Office, and for Settling the Profits thereof upon Us, Our Heirs and Successors.

JAMES R.

WHereas the Office of Post-Master General hath been Erected by Act of Parliament in the Twelfth year of His late Majesties Reign, and the well Ordering thereof is thereby Declared to be a Matter of General Concernment, and of great Advantage, as well for Preservation of Trade and Commerce as otherwise: And whereas also the greatest part of the Revenue and Profits thereby arising, was by One other Act of Parliament in the Fifteenth year of His said late Majesties Reign Granted, and Assigned by His late Majesty unto Us, by the Name of His most Entirely Beloved Brother James Duke of York, For and towards Our Maintenance and Support. And whereas by One other Act of Parliament made in the First Year of Our Reign, the Profits and Revenue of the said Office was Settled upon Us, Our Heirs and Successors; Which Laws and Statutes notwithstanding, several Persons for their private Lucre have lately practised, and do still continue in a secret and most Unlawful manner to make a General Collection of Letters, and to give them Conveyance and Delivery for Hire, without any Authority from the Post-Master General, whereby not only the Revenue arising by the said Office is Diminished, but likewise several Dangerous Correspondencies are Preserved and Maintained, and the Seditious Designs of many Evil disposed Persons are very much Promoted: His Majesty therefore for the Prevention hereof in time to come, and to the end that such Persons who shall presume hereafter to Offend in like manner, may remain without all Excuse, hath thought fit by this His Royal Proclamation to Require and Enjoin all His Loving Subjects, And doth hereby straitly Charge and Command all and every Person and Persons (other then the Post-Master General for the time being, his Deputies or Assigns) that they presume not either directly or indirectly to set up any Office, or to contrive or practise any way or means for Collecting and Receiving of Letters and Packets, or to Carry, Recarry, or Deliver the same with Speed and for Hire And to this end His Majesty doth further Require and Command them and every of them, That they presume not to set up any Foot-Post, Horse-Post, Post or Stage-Coach, or Packet Boat for Carrying or Recarrying of Letters and Packets, or to Employ or make use of any which shall be set up for that purpose, other then such as shall be Licensed and Authorized by the Post-Master General for the time being, his Deputies or Assigns. And because several Carriers, Drivers of Stage-Coaches and Waggons, Haglers, Masters of Ships, Pursers, or other Mariners, do very often, under colour and pretence of their respective Employments, intermeddle with, and intrude upon the Office of the Post-Master General; His Majesty doth hereby more particularly and expressly Charge and Command all Carriers, That they presume not to carry any Letters, other then such as shall concern the Goods wherewith they are Charged, beyond the First Post Stage to which they shall arrive, and that they presume not to outgo their Packs or Waggons, or deliver any Letters which they Carry, sooner or with more speed than their respective Packs or Waggons shall arrive. And His Majesty doth in like manner Charge and Command all Drivers of Stage Coaches, Haglers, and such like Persons, That they presume not in any kind, or upon any pretence whatsoever, to intermeddle with the Conveyance and Delivery of any Letters as aforesaid, but that they do from time to time refuse all such Letters which shall be so tendred to them. And His Majesty doth also Command all Masters of Ships, Boursers and Mariners, That they presume not to Carry any Ship Letters, other than the Letters of Merchants, Owners, and Masters beyond the first Post-Stage to which they shall arrive in England, and that they do there deliver the same unto the Deputy or Deputies only of the Post-Master General for the time being. And if any Carriers, Drivers of Stage-Coaches, Haglers, Masters of Ships, Pursers, or other Mariners shall be found carrying of Letters unlawfully, or in any other manner, they shall incur his Majesties Displeasure, and suffer the utmost Penalty which can be Inflicted upon such as shall be found to have broken his Majesties Laws, and to be Wilful Contemners of his Royal Command; And moreover, all Letters whatsoever sent or conveyed by such Clandestine and Indirect ways, and by persons not Lawfully Authorized, shall be lookt upon as Letters of dangerous Consequence, and shall accordingly be Seized and brought to One of His Majesties Principal Secretaries of State, or to some One or more of the Lords of His Majesties most Honourable Privy Council, to the end the same may be opened and inspected, and the persons Conveying or Sending them, may be proceeded against according to Law. And for the better Execution of His Majesties Command, and as a means to Secure the Revenue arising by the said Office, His Majesty will cause such Searchers, Waiters, and other Officers to be Appointed in all convenient Places, as may be fit and proper for the Discovery of such Practices, and carrying such Letters, to be Seized, and such Offenders Names to be certified. And in the mean time His Majesty doth strictly Charge and Command all Mayors, Sheriffs, Justices of Peace, Constables, Bayliffs, Searchers of His Majesties Ports, and all other His Officers and Ministers whatsoever within their several Jurisdictions and Offices from time to time, to make diligent Search for all Mails, Buggets and Bags, in any Ship, Vessel, Waggon, Coach, or other Unlawful or Unlicensed Carriage, and all such Letters which they find to be Conveyed or Carried contrary to Law, to Seize and send up to One of His Majesties Principal Secretaries of State, or to some One or more of the Lords of His Majesties Privy Council, together with the Names of the Persons Offending, to the end such further Proceeding may be had, as shall be found agreeable to the Laws and Statutes of the Realm. And that no man hereafter may complain for want of a setled Post in or near particular By-Towns or Places lying on the Post-Road, which Complaint hath hitherto been made the Excuse or Pretence for sending or carrying of Letters by other Indirect and Unlawful Conveyances. His Majesty doth hereby also Require and Command the Post-Master General for the time being, to take effectual Care for the Conveyance of all By-Letters, by Establishing Correspondences at the least Charge, and greatest Ease that may be to the Country in all considerable Market-Towns with the next adjacent Post-Stages; And that he cause a Map or Card thereof to be forthwith Printed, to the end that all His Majesties Subjects may know where, and to what Place to address their respective Letters. And His Majesty doth further Charge and Command all and every Person or Persons, other then the Post-Master General for the time being, his Deputies, or Assigns, That they presume not to prepare or provide any Horses or Furnitures to let to Hire, unto, or in all or any the Through-Posts, and Persons Riding Post by Commission or without, to and from all and every the Parts and Places of England, Scotland, and Ireland, where any Post-Roads are or shall be Setled and Established, unless the Post Master General, his Deputies or Assigns shall first fail to Provide and Furnish the Person or Persons so Riding Post, with sufficient Horses and Furniture within the space of half an Hour after Demand thereof made, as they will answer the contrary at their Perils.

Given at Our Court at *Windsor* the Seventh day of *September* 1685. In the First Year of Our Reign.

Vienna, September 6. The last Letters from the Imperial Camp near *Pest* told us, that General *Caprara* was marched with 7 or 8000 Men towards Upper *Hungary*; And that the Duke of *Lorrain* hath sent a strong Party towards *Agria* to see in what posture the Enemy are on that side, which makes us think his Highness intends to attack that place. The Elector of *Bavaria* is expected here in few days, and after a short stay at this Court, will return with the Archdutchess his Wife to *Munick*. The Count *de Scherffenburg* is going to his Government of *Newheusel*; he will take with him a great many Workmen, and a considerable Sum of Mony, for the repairing the Fortifications of that place. The last account we had from the Camp before *Esperies* was, that the Besiegers were advanced to the Ditch, and that they were making Galeries to pass it, but that they met with great opposition from the Besieged, who seem resolved to defend the place to the last extremity. An Officer who is come from *Virovitza*, gives the following Account of

General